

The After-Fate of the Kingdom
457

system which secured to every creed
and every
race protection and peace under the
Crown.
Anti-foreign as they surely were, they
could not
become patriots. Here then is the true
judgment
upon the Norman kingdom, a
judgment passed
by a distinguished historian of Greece
upon the
administration of the Byzantine
Empire, "it was
a Government and not a Nation."
Roger II.
and his successors could force on barons
and towns
a royal authority which might not be
gainsaid,
they could and did secure to four
races, creeds,
and tongues a protection and liberty
almost
unique in the West, they could build up
a brilliant
eclectic civilisation in the south, but
they failed
to make out of Norman barons,
Lombard towns-
men, Saracen traders, Greek peasants
a nation
which could act as one. In this indeed
a happier
destiny waited that country which also
in the
eleventh century was conquered by
Norman
adventurers; William the Conqueror
and his race
laid the foundations of a united nation
in England;
in Italy and Sicily Guiscard and his
successors
could only unite by royal authority
and from
above a land of many races which had
no natural
bond of affinity.

Yet it was a great achievement.
Without the
Norman conquest, without the
organisation
given by Hauteville dukes and
Hauteville kings
to Southern Italy, the peninsula south
of Pescara
and Garigliano would have weltered
long in in-
ternal disunion and foreign
domination; what-